

# ***Tidewater Community College Opens Its Doors To Navy Training***

**by JO2 O'Dell Isaac II, Fleet Combat Training Center, Atlantic**

In the latest of a series of developments aimed at improving the quality and cost-effectiveness of Navy training, Tidewater Community College recently began teaching courses to Navy mess management specialists. The courses focus on general, private, and flag mess operations as well as food preparation. They will be taught at TCC's Norfolk campus to Navy cooks obtaining an additional Navy Enlisted Classification (NEC).

According to Fred Barranger, program analyst for the Local Training Authority (LTA) Hampton Roads, the courses are part of a Chief of Naval Education and Training initiative called Geographically Distributed Training. Barranger, a manager for the GDT program, said it is designed to help localize training that sailors would normally have to travel long distances to get.

"These courses were only taught in San Diego," Barranger said. "It's hard for East Coast sailors to get out there for the training. This way, we're bringing the training to the East Coast."

"GDT will improve the quality of life for our sailors by providing them advance training in their homeport, giving them more time with their family, as well as saving travel dollars," said Dean Norman, CNET Analyst overseeing GDT. According to Norman, "conducting the three courses with Tidewater Community College will save \$900,000 annually in travel cost."

The General Mess Operations/Advanced Food Preparation Course and the Private Mess Operations/Advanced Food Preparation Course will provide Mess Management Specialists with advanced technical knowledge to supervise watch sections, to practice and maintain high standards of sanitation and to produce food products in accordance with nutritional standards within an acceptable cost limit. The courses will be comprised of a maximum of 20 students per class. Each course is five weeks in length and consists of two weeks of classroom work followed by three weeks of hands-on food preparation in a laboratory setting. Upon completion of the course, the sailor will have obtained NEC 3527 (Culinary Specialist) or NEC 3525 (Private Mess Specialist). Each course is also worth 10 credits toward an Associate's Degree in Culinary Arts.

"This is a smart way to deliver training to our sailors," says Vice Admiral Henry C. Giffin, III, Commander of the Atlantic Fleet's Surface Force. "Having specialized schools like this in the Norfolk area not only saves scarce travel money but it gives more of our sailors a chance to obtain this training than otherwise could have, and, at the same time, earn college credit. We need more of these great programs that help our sailors further their education."

The Public Quarters/Flag Mess Operations Course teaches food preparation and service unique to a small mess operation. It is a five-day, non-NEC course for Navy cooks in pay grades E-4 through E-6. The Private Mess Operations Course is a prerequisite for this class.

Military instructors usually teach training courses of this type, but Barranger said TCC is providing the teachers—chefs John Cappellucci and David Arnold—as well as the food preparation facilities.

"The chefs at TCC are great teachers and are perfectly qualified to facilitate these courses," said Barranger.